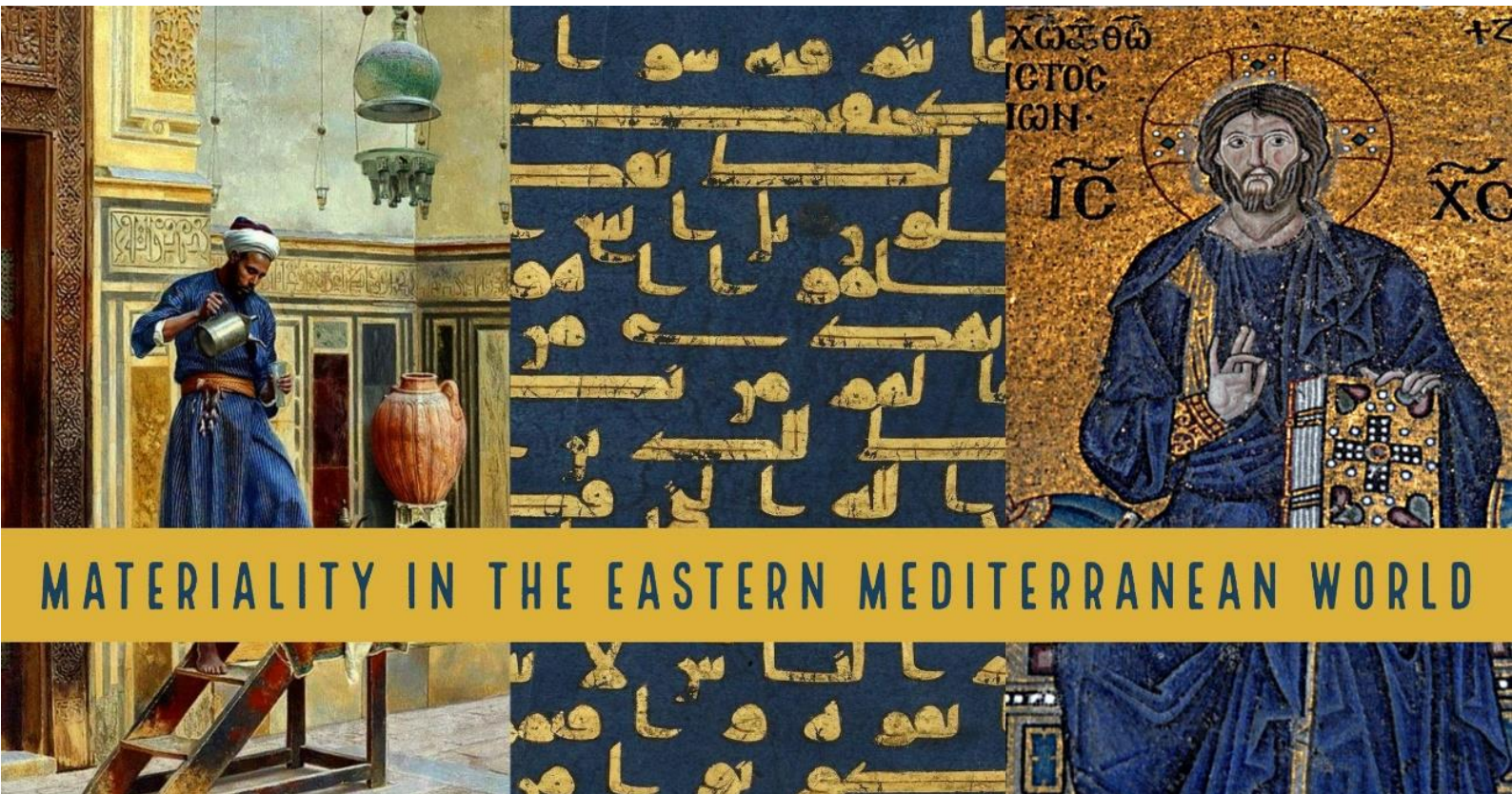




CENTER FOR EASTERN
MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE CONFERENCE

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, VIENNA- BUDAPEST



MATERIALITY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN WORLD

ONLINE CONFERENCE

MAY 28-29, 2021

CONFERENCE BOOKLET

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INFORMATION ABOUT ONLINE FORMAT

Due to the present COVID-19 measurements, we are holding our Seventh International CEMS Graduate Conference in an online environment. We will be using Zoom, where it is easily possible to share presentations. To make sure that everything works smoothly, we ask you to use a laptop or computer with a webcam and microphone because it allows the best quality, although it is also possible to use a tablet or a mobile phone.

Please make sure to follow these guidelines while participating:

- Mute your microphone when you are not presenting or commenting in order to avoid background noise.
- Unmute your microphone only for participating in the discussion after the presentations.
- If you have a question or a comment, use the “raising hand” button in Zoom to let the chair know. Alternatively, you can write your question in the chat.
- If possible, turn on your webcam so we can see each other and interact.

Conference Link

**[https://ceu-
edu.zoom.us/j/95684387299?pwd=SFJXYzFsNDI3TUtyZ3hnS3Brc2RTdzog](https://ceu-edu.zoom.us/j/95684387299?pwd=SFJXYzFsNDI3TUtyZ3hnS3Brc2RTdzog)**

Meeting ID: 956 8438 7299

Passcode: 299336

We will use this link for both days, and we will leave the meeting open during break periods. You are free to stay on the link during the break periods to continue conference conversations.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Friday May 28th

Opening Remarks 10:00-10:30 (CEST)

Brett Wilson (Central European University, Director of CEMS)

Karolina Kotus (Central European University)

SESSION 1

10:30-12:00 (CEST)

Text as an Object

Chair: Brett Wilson (Central European University)

Adélie Chevée (European University Institute), *The Politics of Materiality in Syrian Revolutionary Newspapers*

Nimet İpek (Sabancı University), *A Room of a Reader's Own: Frame (cedvel) Making and Margin Practices in Islamic Manuscripts*

Sergio Carro Martín (Pompeu Fabra University), *Beyond Religious Duty: Rethinking the Islamic Certificates of Pilgrimage Through Materiality*

SESSION 2

12:00-13:30 (CEST)

Art, Images, and Aesthetics

Chair: Sona Grigoryan (Central European University)

Elvin A. Dağher (Koç University), *Late Antique Mosaics in Anatolia Calling for Attention*

Antrea Oratiou (University of Newcastle), *Glazed Wares from Cyprus: Pots, People and Ideas*

Giulia De Ponte (Università degli Studi di Firenze), *A Case Study of 'Khedivial' Orientalism: Stefano Ussi's The Transportation of the Mahmal to Mecca and the Shaping of Khedive Isma'il Pasha's Iconography of Identity and Power*

LUNCH BREAK 13:30-14:30 (CEST)

SESSION 3

14:30-16:30 (CEST)

Objects and Identity

Chair: Dana Sajdi (Boston College)

Anastasia Thamnopolou (University of Bonn), *The Materiality of Smoking. The Ottoman Tobacco Pipes of Palestine*

Savannah Ulalian Bishop (Koç University), *Shedding Light and Spilling Oil: Ceramic Oil Lamps as Markers of Identity and Change in the Eastern Mediterranean*

Katia Arslan (Istanbul Bilgi University), *Beads of Masculinities: Tespih As an Extension of Men's Selves and Bodies*

Benjamin Sharkey (University of Oxford), *Pilgrimage Through the Material: Experiencing Stories and Places Through an 8th-9th Century Bronze Censer in the Christian Community of Samarra*

FRIDAY KEYNOTE LECTURE 17:00 (CEST)

Dana Sajdi

(Boston College)

Text as a Spatial Performance

Abstract: While recent scholarship on materiality has produced new queries in book history and exciting revaluations of the meanings of text, it has yet to consider the text as a production in space. In considering places in and around the text, we would be able to bring out the material, the sonic, and the corporeal to construct clearer images of past social practice and reality.

Dana Sajdi (Ph.D., Columbia University 2002) is Associate Professor of History at Boston College. She is the author of *The Barber of Damascus: Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (2013, Turkish and Arabic translations in 2018); editor of *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century* (2008, in Turkish 2014) and co-editor of *Transforming Loss into Beauty: Essays in Arabic Literature and Culture in Memory of Madga Al-Nowaihi* (2008). She is the recipient of several fellowships including from Princeton University, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (EUME); Research Center for Anatolian Civilization; MIT-Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture; and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. She is working on history of Damascus based on a local tradition of textual representations of the city between 12th-20th centuries.

Saturday May 29th

SESSION 1

11:30-13:30 (CEST)

Material Exchanges

Chair: Volker Menze (Central European University)

Yunus Doğan (Bilkent University), *From Danishmendid Coin to the Catalan Seal: The Material Culture of Saint George*

Anitta G Kunnappilly (Mahatma Gandhi University), *Indo-Mediterranean Trade in Malabar (2nd to 12th Century AD): A Historiographic Reading*

Gay Apolline (École Pratique des Hautes Études), *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph: The Function of Patriarch's Pictures on Egyptian Garments (6th-10th Century)*

Özlem Yıldız (Temple University), *Multisensory Meanings of Sugar Figures in the 1582 Ottoman Imperial Festival*

13:30-14:30 (CEST) LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 2

14:30-16:30 (CEST)

Religion, Spirituality, and Symbols

Chair: Gábor Klaniczay (Central European University)

Fermude Gülsevinç (Bilkent University), *"Prisoner of the Sea, Defended by the Sea, and Punished by the Clemency of Heaven": Christianization the Seascape of Naxos and Rhodes in the Late Antiquity (4th-7th Centuries)*

Matthew R. Westermayer (Cornell University), *Edenic Trees as Material and Noetic Things*

Yusuf Selman İnanç (Central European University), *Where Materiality Meets Spirituality: Türbe Rituals in Contemporary Turkey*

Raluca Prelipceanu (Babeş-Bolyai University), *Angelic Representations from Immateriality to Materiality*

SESSION 3

16:45- 18:15 (CEST)

Objects on the Move

Chair: Charlie Barber (Princeton University)

Nikita Bogachev (Central European University), *The Adventures of the Hand: The Cult of Relics in Byzantium Around 1000*

Lavinia Gambini (University of Cambridge), *Sacred Christian Artefacts in the Greek Archipelago, ca. 1650–1700*

Stefano Saracino (University of Jena), *The Material Culture of Halle Pietists in the Ottoman Empire in the Ottoman Empire on the Eve of the 18th century*

SATURDAY KEYNOTE LECTURE 18:30 (CEST)

Charlie Barber

(Princeton University)

Formlessness and Potentiality: Reflections on Art and Materiality in Fourteenth-Century Byzantium

The first part of this paper will offer some readings of the definitions and use of Matter in a variety of writings, primarily from the early-fourteenth century. Formlessness, Potentiality, and Harmonics will be discussed as aspects of Materiality. Works by George Pachymeres and Theodore Metochites will be a particular focus. The second part of the paper will propose a reading of the use of marble in Metochites' church of the Holy Savior in Chora. I will argue that the display of marble in the church was more than a demonstration of material resources. Its presence speaks to the very identity of the monastery.

Charlie Barber is the Donald Drew Egbert Professor of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University. Barber's area of specialization is the history of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine art, with a particular focus on the history and theory of the icon. He has also worked extensively on Byzantine aesthetics and intellectual history and with Byzantine manuscripts. He has written and co-edited a number of books. These include two studies of the contested status of the icon in Byzantium: *Figure and Likeness: On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm* (2002) and *Contesting the Logic of Painting: Art and Understanding in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (2007). Current and future research will lead to books that examine the status of the icon in the 14th and 16th centuries. In addition to presenting papers at numerous domestic and international conferences and symposia, Barber has co-organized several interdisciplinary workshops on Byzantine intellectual history. These have resulted in such publications as *Reading Michael Psellos* (2006), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics* (2009) and *Michael Psellos on Literature and Art: A Byzantine Perspective on Aesthetics* (2017).

Concluding Remarks by the Organizers 19:30-20:00

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Adélie Chevée

(European University Institute)

The Politics of Materiality in Syrian Revolutionary Newspapers

Abstract: In the tumultuous decade that followed the 2011 Uprising in Syria, hundreds of Syrians became interested in printing, distributing or writing for their own locally produced newspaper, breaking with years of censorship. Accounts of the Syrian conflict have failed to address the question of why citizens went to such great lengths to print newspapers and magazines despite the fact that online news and social media made it easier and quicker to reach potential readers and that printing periodicals in wartime presented serious material difficulties. My research proposes to address this empirical puzzle, by delving into a unique archive of 304 print magazines and newspapers published between 2011 and 2018 by Syrian opposition activists. I examine the symbolic value print newspapers represented as material objects. The central argument I advance is that print newspapers were arguably one of the richest and most intriguing technologies for framing forms of grassroots politics in revolutionary Syria. I argue that in today's world, the newspaper, particularly as a material, tangible object (Appadurai, 1986), is a framing device and repertoire to frame and enact revolutionary politics. I do this by underlying the importance of these newspapers for documentation and archiving as forms of political activism.

Adélie Chevée is a political scientist with a research focus on popular protests, social movements, contentious politics, elites' knowledge practices and media, with a special interest in the Middle East. As a postdoctoral fellow (IHEID - European University Institute), Adélie carries a research project on the impact of popular and nationalist ideologies on the dynamics of intellectual and civil society mobilization, using the Syrian opposition media as a case study. Her Ph.D. thesis (SOAS) focused on the contentious politics of revolutionary intellectual labour in the aftermath of the 2011 Uprising in Syria.

Nimet İpek

(Sabancı University)

A Room of a Reader's Own: Frame (cedvel) Making and Margin Practices in Islamic Manuscripts

Abstract: This study firstly attempts to find an answer to the question on "What is the text?". Regarding this question, secondly, frame-making practices in Islamic manuscripts from various centuries are included in this respect. So, through the earlier centuries, while manuscript layout does not include a *cedvel* and margins were narrower than the former centuries relatively, later centuries began to include *cedvel* in their layout circa 11th century. Thus, the meaning of the text was evolving into another ontological context. Later on, 14th century onward there is an exponential abrupt jump regarding proportions between margin and the text block in favor of the former. Parallel to this ontological shift, the text had been evolving into a dynamic meaning that includes the reader in default, as well; the text hereafter means an alive organism devoid of hierarchies between the author and the reader. This study is going to dwell on frame-making practices within this perspective including contextual shift and ratio between the text block and the margin.

Even, some later examples appear with double frames in which implies the inclusion of the book-binder or later repairers within the “ecological ontologies of the text” and *mise-en-page*. The case of this study is *al-Hidāya* copies with a copying date available to us in the manuscript libraries of Turkey.

Nimet İpek is a Ph.D. student at the History Department of the Sabancı University in Istanbul. She is interested in reading and writing practices in the Ottoman world, and in the Islamic culture in the broader sense, as well as, eager to learn about the codicology.

Sergio Carro Martín

(Pompeu Fabra University)

Beyond Religious Duty: Rethinking the Islamic Certificates of Pilgrimage Through Materiality

Abstract: Islamic certificates of pilgrimage are legal documents that, from the 11th century, attested the fulfilment of this religious duty by a proxy who made the pilgrimage on behalf of another person. Most of these certificates bear illustrations of the holy places of Mecca and Medina, what transforms them in “objects” endowed with baraka (“sanctity”). As a result of this connection between faith and materiality, these documents can be analysed from different points of view. Following Arjun Appadurai (*The Social Life of Things*), the materiality of objects, as in these certificates, help us to understand more about the ways in which people used them. My aim is to apply this material perspective to the study of the Islamic certificates of pilgrimage by analysing different textual, iconographic and material (folds, marks and holes...) evidence of their use, non-use and disuse. This material approach will allow me to highlight other possible uses these documents, for instance, as instructive materials or amulets, and to reconstruct the different lives behind them, beyond religious duty for which they were born.

Sergio Carro Martín holds a degree in Arabic Philology from the University of Salamanca and a PhD in Humanities from the Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona (2019). He has developed his research activity at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC-CCHS-ILC) and the Pompeu Fabra University, as a member of the Research Group Mediterranean Archeology: Connections, Materialities and Writing. Since 2011 he has participated in the DVCTVS Project managing the databases of the papyrological collections in Spain. His main lines of research are Islamic law, Arabic Papyrology, Codicology, and material culture in the Arab and Islamic world.

Elvin A. Dağher

(Koç University)

Late Antique Mosaics in Anatolia Calling for Attention

Abstract: This paper aims to discuss the ways in which early Byzantine mosaics in Anatolia attract attention and curiosity among beholders and secure awareness. In addition to their function to cover and insulate the floor, these mosaic pavements have the tesserae almost always combined in a way to convey a visual image and/or a message. In this respect, they

compete with furniture, sculptures, textiles, wall decoration as well as humans present in the spatial context. Thus, they need to call attention through their colors, materials, compositions and motifs apart from their irregularity under foot. Such tools available to ca. 400 secular mosaic pavements in Anatolia are analyzed in a quantitative study and then the impact of polychromy, framing, registering or scattering motifs as well as variety and orientation of these motifs on the beholder is discussed with examples. This paper hopefully will not only call more attention to Late Antique mosaic floors in secular contexts in Anatolia, but also encourage more analyses on the interactions between mosaics and humans.

Elvin Akbulut Daglier is pursuing Late Antique and Byzantine studies as an MA student at the department of Archaeology and History of Art at Koc University in Istanbul. She is currently working on her thesis on the Byzantine floor mosaics of Anatolia in secular contexts in Late Antiquity. Aiming for a multidisciplinary approach, she is interested in learning about daily life in Byzantium through material remains. Her article on rights of cultural objects with the “Gypsy Girl” mosaic of Zeugma as a case study was published in 2020 in *New Frontiers in Archaeology: Proceedings of the Cambridge Annual Student Archaeology Conference 2019*.

Antrea Oratiou

(University of Newcastle)

Glazed Wares from Cyprus: Pots, People and Ideas

Abstract: Medieval glazed wares were well known in the Byzantine and Latin East, they were found in numerous sites of different characters, leaving no doubt that they were greatly distributed. But how did those glazed wares affect people the owners, the users, the potters, the merchants? In this paper I intend to find an answer, or at least recommend an alternative approach to these types of pottery. Archaeological theories will be incorporated, mainly those focusing on the ways material culture, and more specifically objects, affected people using them and how people experienced them as objects. Things can act, as material agency advocates, and they can be more than passive instruments. Additionally, the images which decorate the Cypriot glazed wares, by being part of the materiality of the ceramics can trigger memories and simulate emotions. For example, the “wedding bowls”, as previous scholars have claimed, depict an embraced couple denoting a wedding scene. Therefore, it is plausible that the aforementioned bowls were objects commemorating weddings, evoking memories, as photographs do today. Moreover, food psychology will be incorporated in the paper, as a reminder of how we can use of how we can use modern theories to understand the experiences of people in the past. Lastly, I would discuss Cypriot glazed wares, being part of a koine and how people choosing that type of glazed wares, a broad pottery group, can illustrate their identity.

Antrea Oratiou admiration towards history and culture led her to study Archaeology in the University of Cyprus (Bachelor’s degree in History and Archaeology with specialisation in Archaeology). During her studies in the University of Cyprus she was taught, through classes and field work during summer in several Archaeological programmes, how to properly work and comprehend the archaeological material, among other things. After a gap year, she began my MA studies in the University of Newcastle in Late Antique, Medieval and Byzantine Archaeology. During her time at Newcastle University, she was introduced in different ways of approaching the archaeological material, which she

ignored in the past. Those approaches, mainly archaeological theories and more specifically material agency or materiality, truly caught her interest and drew her towards new ideas that she tried to include in her work. Her MA dissertation was titled “Reconstructing identities, everyday life, dining habits in Late Roman Cyprus”, incorporating all of her interests in archaeology.

Giulia De Ponte

(Università degli Studi di Firenze)

A Case study of ‘Khedivial’ Orientalism: Stefano Ussi’s The Transportation of the Mahmal to Mecca and the Shaping of Khedive Isma’il Pasha’s Iconography of Identity and Power

Abstract: My case study will aim to explore appropriation in mid-nineteenth-century Egypt of the European fine art tradition as a means to assert the Khedive’s power and sovereignty. Throughout history, artistic images have served as vehicles for the transmission of cultural and political messages, and this is no less true of societies like that of the Ottoman Empire, observant of the Islamic precept of aniconism. Duly citing precedents in the history of the Empire – and that of the early Khedivate itself – the dissertation will show how *The Transportation of the Mahmal to Mecca* (1873), painted under commission by the Italian painter Stefano Ussi (1822-1901) for the Khedive Isma’il Pasha, deploys the European orientalist idiom to give ‘modern’ expression to the historical/religious identity and autonomy of the Pasha’s Egypt; an appropriation here termed ‘Khedivial Orientalism’, following Ussama Makdisi’s concept of ‘Ottoman Orientalism’. This was achieved not only through the artistic rendering of an annual event of vital cultural significance for Egypt’s Muslim community, that of the pilgrimage to Mecca, but also by the painting’s display in conspicuous sites of power, such as the 1873 Vienna World Fair and Abdin Palace in Cairo, which was supposed to house the viceregal art collection. On the model of European dynastic collections, this last had the role of internationally affirming the legitimacy and sovereignty of a Khedivate then in the ascendent, though still overshadowed by the Ottoman Empire and already threatened by European interference.

Giulia De Ponte is an Art History student set to obtain her Master’s degree at the Università degli Studi di Firenze by the end of April 2021. She obtained her Bachelor’s degree, in the History and Conservation of Cultural Heritage at the same Institution with a thesis on the formation of the iconography of Christ in the early stages of the Constantinian Empire and its religious and political significance. The encounter with this topic developed her interest in the status of images in the Middle East, which in turn led to specialization in the field of nineteenth-century Orientalist art and especially its reappropriation in the Middle East.

Anastasia Thamnopoulou

(University of Bonn)

The Materiality of Smoking: The Ottoman Tobacco Pipes of Palestine

Abstract: The Ottoman expansion to the Levant left behind significant material culture, which, gradually unearthed by archaeological projects, reflects daily life aspects of the Ottoman provinces. The current paper focuses on clay tobacco pipes (chibouk) as a means

of study of the spread and distribution of tobacco in Ottoman Palestine, as well as personal items and a form of expression of social identity. Although the Ottoman clay pipes constitute a usual finding in the former Arab provinces, few of them derive from safe contexts or have been approached as archaeological artifacts that could answer questions, regarding daily life aspects or the culture of consumption. A spatial analysis of tobacco pipes can help trace tobacco consumption in space and time, while further investigating the public sphere and the shaping of political thought, as smoking was closely related to the coffee houses, a very first version of a public space that shaped group identity through its own microcosmos. The coffee houses (*kahvehanes*) and their popularity became a centre of expression of gender, as only men were allowed, social identity of its customers, who belonged in different social groups and a stage for the shaping the political thought of its visitors, as the time there was spent with gathering and discussions on current issues. For the above reasons, the current paper aims to address questions that apply in more than one fields of study and create a fertile ground for further reflections on the matter.

Anastasia Thamnopoulou is a post graduate student in Islamic Archaeology at the Department of Asian and Oriental Studies at University of Bonn, Germany (2017-today). Her Master thesis focuses on the Ottoman tobacco pipes of Palestine, under the supervision of Prof. Bethany Walker and Dr. Evrim Binbas. She completed her Bachelor studies in Archaeology and Art History in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece in 2016. Her scholarly interests include the material culture of the Ottoman era of the Eastern Mediterranean, especially Greece and the former Arab provinces, as well as an interdisciplinary approach to historical archaeologies of the early modern periods of the region.

Savannah Ulalian Bishop

(Koç University)

Shedding Light and Spilling Oil: Ceramic Oil Lamps as Markers of Identity and Change in the Eastern Mediterranean

Abstract: Ceramic oil lamps have long been regarded not only for their use as a diagnostic tool for the determination of chronology in archaeological strata, but for the insight they provide into the lives of the individuals who used them; especially in the Eastern Mediterranean. This is due to the ubiquity of ceramic oil lamps in the ancient world with their consistency in form and function despite stylistic differences. Given this simultaneous static and fluid nature, the question arises: what mechanisms of change influenced these distinct stylistic variations? In essence, what factors—religious, political, cultural, economic, and technological, resulted in these lamps being unique in style, iconography, or form? Among the lamps I investigate an ideal application of this inquiry comes in the form of the Byzantine period candlestick type. Adapted by numerous cultural groups, the candlestick oil lamp became the distinctive emblem in affirming the Jewish faith of the object's owner beginning in the Roman Period. In the Byzantine period, the candlestick decoration became conventionalized, with Christians appropriating the iconography of candles and menorahs on these types of lamps while adding Greek inscription. In this way, the Candlestick type oil lamps contain conscious and unconscious levels of meaning, appropriation by means of transculturation, and the reflexivity of identity in the Eastern Mediterranean. Through the examination of Eastern Mediterranean oil lamp typology over time, this paper argues that the function of oil lamps has remained constant while their style and the meaning therein encapsulated has changed to fit their contexts.

Savannah Bishop is a Ph.D. student in the department of Archaeology and the History of Art, in the Maritime specialization, at Koç University. Her research interests include Archaeological Science, Maritime Archaeology, Mediterranean Archaeology, Material Culture, Daily Life, and the Digital Humanities.

Katia Arslan

(Istanbul Bilgi University)

Beads of Masculinities: Tespih As an Extension of Men's Selves and Bodies

Abstract: As part of Islamite culture in Turkey, *tespih*, 99 or 33 beaded strings, is a ubiquitous artifact in Turkey. Although in Islam, it is used for commemorating God's 99 names, it is also used as part of gender performance re-creating gender relations in everyday life. As can be seen in the section where I discuss the implications of the *tespih* in Ottoman and Turkish literature and Turkish popular culture, my research points out the *tespih*'s meanings in relation to gender, religion, social class, tradition and modernity, and more importantly senses of self through which male subjectivity is experienced. My aim is to demonstrate how *tespih* limits, permits, and creates masculinities as an extension of men's selves and bodies. In line with this aim, the study was semi-structured with a total of 39 in-depth interviews with people from 12 districts in 6 neighbourhoods of Istanbul. In addition to the interviews, non-participant observations were made in various districts in Istanbul. As a result, while the ways in the use of *tespih*, its materiality, and its historically and culturally formed meanings shape *tespih* culture and point out the conflict among different hegemonic masculinities to access authority, they also illustrate self as object and self as a subject are experienced as feminine and masculine.

Katia Arslan is currently an independent researcher. Her recent study focuses on the reproduction of masculinities and experiences of male subjectivity through the lens of *tespih*, prayer beads, or worry beads in Turkey. She received her master's degree in sociology from Istanbul Bilgi University. In her thesis, she focused on the meanings and functions of the use of *tespih*. She was solicited to Princeton University to deliver a talk to introduce culture in Turkey based on her thesis.

Benjamin Sharkey

(University of Oxford)

Pilgrimage Through the Material: Experiencing Stories and Places Through an 8th-9th Century Bronze Censer in the Christian Community of Samarqand

Abstract: In the Middle Ages, the vast majority of members of a religious community were 'simple believers,' in that their belief was not intellectual, in doctrines, but in stories. Many simple believers had low levels of literacy, and they engaged with and experienced stories visually and sensually. In this paper I will examine an eighth-to-ninth century bronze censer excavated from the minority Christian community at Urgut, Samarqand (present-day Uzbekistan), illustrating scenes from the life of Christ. I will explore how this object helped the community engage visually and sensually with Christian stories and experience

the presence of the wider Christian community in the eastern Mediterranean Syriac heartlands, representing the simple believers' pilgrimage through the material. As with Christian manuscripts in Central Asia, direct iconographic comparisons exist from the Eastern Mediterranean. I will investigate the connections between Christian communities in Central Asia and the middle east represented by the censer, and its role in helping minority communities materially experience the presence of the wider Christian community. The crucifixion has generally been claimed to have been iconographically shirked by East Syriac Christians, but here it is used as a visual aid to the imagination in its specific liturgical storytelling context. A similar censer, depicted in fresco painting from the Christian Central Asian context, is used in Palm Sunday celebrations. Incense served as a sensory stimulus to the imagination in the theatrical enactment of story. Simple believers geographically removed from the sites of gospel events, made a pilgrimage through the visual and sensual.

Benjamin Sharkey gained a BA in History from the University of Birmingham and is now in his second year of MPhil Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at the University of Oxford. Having completed projects on Christian conversion among Turkic nomads and the Baghdad Patriarchate, he is now undertaking thesis research on connection and continuation among non-nomadic Christian communities in Central Asia.

Yunus Doğan

(Bilkent University)

From Danishmendid Coin to the Catalan Seal: The Material Culture of Saint George

Abstract: In the medieval Eastern Mediterranean, the cult of St. George has been one of the phenomena of cultural exchange among different political and religious communities like Orthodox, Latins and Muslims. The transformation of his cult into material objects, (coins, seals, and paintings), commissioned by both Muslims and Christians, not only reflects his role in crossing religious and cultural borders, but also highlights the complex political, cultural, and religious relations in Mediterranean. In this sense, two good examples can help us to understand the connections between ideas and material objects, as well as their reflections on socio-political and cultural life in the eastern Mediterranean. The first one is a copper coin of Danishmendid emir Nāşir al-Dīn Muḥammad (1162-1170), representing St. George piercing the dragon. The second example is seal of the Catalan Company, issued in 1305, in which St. George appeared accompanied by an inscription in Latin. Both objects present distinctive and similar characteristics that allow a glimpse of the socio-political and cultural world in which they were created. While the former reflects the direct cultural contact between the Danishmendids and Crusader Principality of Antioch in twelfth century, the latter brings to light the political and military tension between Catalans and Byzantine Empire in the eastern Mediterranean in fourteenth century. In this light, the abovementioned objects offer a glimpse of the way in which material culture at the same time shaped and expressed the multifaceted interaction across the religious, cultural, and political borders of the medieval Mediterranean.

Yunus Doğan graduated from the Department of History at Middle East Technical University in 2016 with a thesis entitled "Convivencia and Reconquista a History among Muslims Jews and Christians in Medieval Iberian Peninsula". He completed his master degree in the Department of History at Bilkent University with a dissertation on "The

Transformation of an Itinerant Army: from the Catalan Company to the Catalan Duchy of Athens and Neopatra (1303- 1388)". Currently, he is a PhD candidate in the same department where he studies on the cross-cultural interactions and diplomatic practices between the Western and Eastern Mediterranean polities (ca.1350-ca.1550). Since 2019, he is one of the managerial assistants of the Byzantium at Ankara Seminar Series.

Anitta G Kunnappilly

(Mahatma Gandhi University)

Indo- Mediterranean Trade in Malabar (2nd to 12th Century AD): A Historiographic Reading

Abstract: The ancient province of Malabar in Kerala was the fulcrum of the international spices trade route. The territory consisted of port towns such as Muziris, Nelcynda, Tyndis and Barace - the transoceanic ports. *The Periplus of the Erythrean sea*, the Peutinger tablet, works of Strabo and Pliny has narrated the trade, pirates and Roman settlements in Malabar. The excerpts of Greece- Roman works had concurrence by Tamil works of *Silapadikaram* and *Manimkhalai*. The Muziris-Vienna papyrus, a 2nd C AD parchment (SB XVIII 13167, Austrian National Library) has explained a loan contract on commodities like Pepper and other ointments that were traded off the Malabar coast to Egypt. The trade is outlined by cross-referencing the literary resources. With the methodology of Historiography on native and Mediterranean works reckoning on the exchange is drawn. In this exploratory work, the author has analyzed the trade- social life of the port towns, the impact of international goods exchange on the Malabar economy and a comparative analysis on the pattern of trade in the Mediterranean and Malabar. The literature analysis has revealed that the Malabar economy was a prosperous province due to brisk international commerce. The research considers the socio-political conditions as complimentary to trade. The international exchange acted as a gateway for religions like Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam to India.

Anitta G Kunnappilly is a post-graduate in Economics. This study was undertaken for her Masters' dissertation with a month internship with Kerala Council for Historical Research. Currently she is enrolled for her doctoral research. Her area of interest includes ancient trade, agriculture, and papyrology.

Gay Apolline

(École Pratique des Hautes Études)

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph: The Function of Patriarch's Pictures on Egyptian Garments (6th-10th Centuries)

Abstract: The Egyptian corpus of Joseph's tapestries has been well known since the 1980s and is currently referenced throughout many collections around the world. In the literature on this subject, Joseph's popularity on textiles is often explained by the success story of this character on Egyptian soil, and by the figure's portrayal as a model of virtue. However, some researchers, as Henry Maguire, perceive these images differently, by studying Joseph's tapestries through the function of these objects. Drawing on this novel approach, this study will discuss the role of patriarchs' images on "Coptic" textiles, by simultaneously examining tapestries of Joseph and the Sacrifice of Isaac. The aim is to

understand how an image is understood and adapted to be efficient in a particular medium, that of the garment. For this purpose, I will compare similarities and differences between the two iconographic schemes: which passages of the tale are chosen by the craftsman? How are the key narrative elements of the story spread throughout the space of the representation? The result of these observations will make it possible to deduce which type of story is generally popular on garments, and allows us to go beyond the anecdotal aspect of biblical tales. Other typologies of objects, as amulets, will be summoned to better grasp the perception of our iconographic patterns, particularly in the case of the Sacrifice of Isaac. Finally, I will go beyond the question of the telling to deal with the problem of non-narrative elements: pseudo-inscriptions, illegible images, repetitions. The purpose is to determine the importance of the story's accuracy facing the inherent power of images.

Gay Apolline is master's student in Art History at Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris, after a bachelor's degree at Ecole du Louvre, with a specialisation in Christian Archaeology. His current research, for his thesis, focuses on iconography of prophets and patriarchs in Byzantine Egypt, considering the ambiguity of this territory in the Bible.

Özlem Yıldız

(Temple University)

Multisensory Meanings of Sugar Figures in the 1582 Ottoman Imperial Festival

Abstract: The Ottoman circumcision festival of 1582 was full of spectacles. Fireworks, musicians, dancers, and the guild processions have attracted historians' attention for a long time. In the meantime, sugar figures remained as a lesser-known curiosity in history writing. They have been referred to as less elaborate predecessors of the candy gardens of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century festivals. This paper studies the sugar figures of 1582 as multisensory and political objects that were crucial parts of the festival from the beginning to the end. It argues that, through stimulation of multiple senses, sugar figures displayed wealth and power, emphasized class differences, and claimed superiority over political rivals, especially Venice. The figures' presentation and consumption appealed to the senses of sight, touch, taste, and hearing in an environment with an abundance of sensual stimuli. It addressed emotions, too, by refreshing the memories of victory and defeat. In this internationally attended festival, the extravagant procession of sugar figures alluded to the recent Ottoman-Venetian wars of 1570-1573, which resulted in the Ottoman capture of Cyprus, Venice's main source of sugar. While the memory of the Ottoman-Venetian War was kept alive with the mock battles that were staged during the festival, sugar figures provided another platform, one which Venetian guests were familiar with, to evoke the recent rivalry between the two states.

Özlem Yıldız is a Ph.D. student in Art History at Temple University, Philadelphia. She holds an MA in History of Art and Architecture of the Islamic Middle East from SOAS University of London, an MA in History, and a BA in Political Sciences from Sabanci University, Istanbul. Her work focuses on cross-cultural exchanges in Ottoman and Safavid illustrated manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She is the recipient of The Barakat Trust International Studentship, Max van Berchem Scholarship for Young Scholars, and Ralph Pinder-Wilson Travel Award.

Fermude Gülsevinç

(Bilkent University)

“Prisoner of the Sea, Defended by the Sea, and Punished by the Clemency of Heaven”: Christianization the Seascape of Naxos and Rhodes in the Late Antiquity (4th-7th Centuries)

Abstract: The history of the Aegean Sea resonates with the concept of insularity, its islands as any land surrounded by sea, can rhyme with isolation and remoteness as well as connectivity and resilience. Indeed, insularity partially rests on concept of seascape that is defined as a myriad of histories, experiences, skills, and relationships of importance for those who traverse it and live on or near it. It moulds perceptions and representations of insular territories on the part of its inhabitants. With this in mind, this paper will discuss ideological dynamics of the Christianization in the Aegean islands by focusing on two key studies: Naxos and Rhodes. Naxos provides us with a gradual process which resulted in projecting a Christian image into the sea to tame it by erection of the coastal basilicas; whereas in Rhodes we are faced with an insular scape characterized by its proximity to and straight political and economic relation with the Anatolian hinterland. Archaeological evidence, material culture and religious architectures will be therefore paired with local hagiographies and literary sources to show that the Christianization process on the abovementioned islands had inherent characteristics and qualities peculiar to an insular environment. Indeed, it pulsed with the dichotomy of connectivity-insulation as well as with the idea concept and perceptions of seascape regarded as main backcloth against which material and imaginary self-representations are projected.

Fermude Gülsevinç is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Bilkent University as she is currently completing her research on the Christianization process of the seascape and insularscape of the Aegean Islands. She received her MA from Hacettepe University with a thesis entitled “Narrating the Victimhood among the Early Christian Communities” and she has been the recipient of the 2021 Dumbarton Oaks Bliss Symposium Award.

Matthew R. Westermayer

(Cornell University)

Edenic Trees as Material and Noetic Things

Abstract: The tree of knowledge and the tree of life, in the middle of Eden, appear to straddle a line between materiality and the imaginary; these trees might demonstrate the interdependency of such concepts, “matter” and the “imagination,” especially in the Greek texts of the eastern Mediterranean from the 1st through the 5th centuries CE. Over and over again, these trees, and the portrait of a God who plants, were censored, and yet paradoxically they remained fundamental for many textual and ethical projects. A “real” tree of life was unthinkable, and dangerous, even while the evocative tapestry of wooden materiality entangled these iterative denials. This presents a uniquely vegetal tension, which exceeds any discussion of literal and allegorical exegesis. Absent, yet recurring, these trees offer a window into not only ancient environmental perception, but also how discourses of vegetal materiality can saw off the branch that it rests upon. While “paradise” has attracted many scholarly accounts, we have yet to trace the interconnections of Eden’s trees with the broader vegetal and pseudo-ecological discourses that are just beneath the surface, and in the process, learn of the persistent specters of the vegetal in late antiquity.

This paper seeks to foreground trees, and their material role, in the milieu of Jewish and Christian late antiquity.

Matthew R. Westermayer is a 3rd-year PhD student in Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University. His research focuses on early and late ancient Christianity, especially in Greek, Coptic, and Syriac locals. Questions of ancient trees, their perception and cognitive tracings, have occupied me for years; and I hope to write a dissertation on them. He also works on anthropomorphic images and material culture, especially in Upper Egypt.

Yusuf Selman İnanç

(Central European University)

Where Materiality Meets Spirituality: Türbe Rituals in Contemporary Turkey

Abstract: This presentation attempts to delve into the socio-political implications of tombs/shrines (*türbe*) as a contested space in contemporary Turkey through looking at how differently it is perceived by the state and Sufis. While the *türbe* lays at the center of centuries-old theological debates among Muslims, this presentation mainly deals with the approaches, developed after the foundation of the secular Republic in 1923 with the argument that *türbe* debates correspond to the fields of not only theology but also sociology and anthropology. Even though the Republic imposed a ban on *türbes* along with Sufi lodges in 1925 on the grounds that these spaces were the sources of “superstitious Islam,” it has later developed the concept of “great Turks” as tombs of Sultans were opened in 1950, indicating the official efforts to Turkify Islam. On the other side, the Sufis, particularly Naqshbandis attributed a great importance to *türbe* mainly for maintaining the *rabita* ritual, and the link with the source of spiritual legitimacy since the buried person in a *türbe* would take place in a lineage that goes back to Prophet Muhammad. The profoundly varying approaches of the state and Sufis to *türbe* signal the presence of a disagreement on Islam understanding. Therefore, this presentation aims to dig deeper into the following questions: How does a *türbe*, a material place, become a perennial source of spirituality? How is this materiality transformed into spirituality? What are the socio-political reflections of *türbes* within the society? Where does *türbe* stand between state-banned Sufism and state-promoted Islam?

Yusuf Selman İnanç is a graduate student at Central European University. His current master’s thesis in the history department deals with the emergence of Naqshbandi Sufi order as a socio-political force in Turkey in the 1950s. Previously, he worked as a journalist and completed his first master’s degree at SOAS, focusing on Islamist movements in Egypt.

Raluca Prelipceanu

(Babeş-Bolyai University)

Angelic Representations from Immateriality to Materiality

Abstract: This paper deals with the representations of angels. Angels were conceived as immaterial beings. Their realm was beyond men’s reach, yet men felt an urge to get closer to these superior beings mentioned in the Holy Scripture and in the apocryphal texts. In this context, one of the main questions that arose was ‘How can angels be represented?’ Their textual descriptions are based on their manifestations and not on their real

appearance. The first known angelic representation dates back to the 3rd century in the catacomb of Priscilla. A whole debate arose among the theologians in the Byzantine empire even before the iconoclast period on the appropriateness of angelic representations. In order to be represented angels must have a materiality, but what kind of materiality? Do they have sex? Should they be represented rather as women or as men? These are some of the questions set forth in this paper. The representation of angels relies heavily on symbols that can be deciphered and interpreted by initiated viewers. What symbols and what do they symbolize, how were they chosen to represent the invisible world, a reality that is beyond our senses? These issues are also addressed in this paper. Another important debate about the nature of angels took place in the Western world during the Middle Ages. It has shaped our conception and gaze on angels to this day. This is the last issue discussed by the paper along with the changes that occurred in the representation of angelic immateriality.

Raluca Prelipceanu is currently a second-year MA student at the University of Babeş Bolyai in Cluj where she studies Society, Arts, and Identities. Her graduation paper deals with angelic representations. She has received an excellency award on behalf of Babeş Bolyai University for her research contributions. She also holds an MA in Development Economics and a PhD both from the University of Paris 1 Pantheon Sorbonne. She taught at the universities of Paris, Marne-la- Vallée, and Evry.

Nikita Bogachev

(Central European University)

The Adventures of the Hand: The Cult of Relics in Byzantium Around 1000

Abstract: This paper will focus on the importance of holy relics to Byzantine culture in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It will explore a set of texts devoted to parts of saints' bodies and will attempt to reconstruct the roles those material fragments played in the daily life of Byzantines as well as in the political imagination of the imperial capital. The analytical framework of the paper will cover the theological implications of corporeal fragmentation in Byzantine religious thought and the narratives constructed about the posthumous use of parted sanctified bodies. At the centre of this paper will be Theodore Daphnopates's "Discourse on the Translation of the hand of Saint John the Baptist from Antioch to Constantinople" which recounts the history of one hand from the early ages of Christianity to the Daphnopates's own time culminating in its arrival to Constantinople. The present paper will also focus on the hagiographical and poetic texts which address the posthumous lives of saints' bodies and the fates of their parts. One of the primary aims of this work is to pose new question to the texts that were overlooked in the contemporary studies of Byzantium.

Nikita Bogachev is an alumnus of the Medieval Studies Department at the Central European University in Budapest/Vienna. Nikita's academic interests are varying from historical anthropology and literary theory to theology. His MA thesis defended in 2020 focused on repentance and corporeality in the works of John Climacus and Symeon the New Theologian.

Lavinia Gambini

(University of Cambridge)

Sacred Christian Artefacts in the Greek Archipelago, ca. 1650–1700

Abstract: The paper investigates the circulation of Catholic and Orthodox artefacts in the seventeenth-century Aegean by focusing on François Richard's (SJ) account (1657) about the French Jesuit missions to the Cyclades. Richard described how Jesuit missionaries and itinerant 'calogeri' (Greek monks) imported to the Archipelago sacred objects for the means of faith- and community-making. Missionaries used objects (e.g., *agnus dei*) to (re-)establish confessional boundaries: seventeenth-century Greek Aegean communities often engaged in the *communicatio in sacris*, the practice of sharing and alternating Greek and Latin rites. The Jesuits believed that a devotional response to their imported Catholic objects would draw the population of the Cyclades to reconnect with the Western-Catholic world. This missionary use of Catholic objects in the Cyclades premised a 'sacred gaze' shared by Latins and Greeks, thereby uncovering missionary ideas about the Archipelago. Richard's account also uncovers similarities between the behaviour of missionaries and itinerant 'calogeri' in the Cyclades. Both went on periodic visitations of the Greek islands and introduced to the Archipelago sacred objects constructed with the Mediterranean: these objects were portable, easily multipliable, and informed by their itineraries. None of these objects could be locally sourced but had to pass through a Catholic or Orthodox holy place (e.g., Rome or Mount Athos) to acquire its sacrality. The use, materiality, and meaning of these objects reveal how 'lived' and 'material religion' religion functioned in the Cycladic context, thereby showing how Jesuit missionary strategies 'mirrored' Greek ones and how the Aegean oceanity, insularity, connectivity, and cyclicity informed their practices.

Lavinia Gambini is currently an MPhil candidate in Early Modern History at the University of Cambridge and the Gurnee Hart MPhil Scholar of Jesus College. Her MPhil thesis focuses on 'religious geographies' of the Aegean in seventeenth-century Western thought and is supervised by Prof Mary Laven. She holds an offer from the Cambridge Faculty for History to pursue her postgraduate studies at doctoral level (PhD). She was awarded a full scholarship by the Cambridge International Trust for the duration of the PhD programme.

Stefano Saracino

(University of Jena)

The Material Culture of Halle Pietists in the Ottoman Empire on the Eve of the 18th century

Abstract: On the eve of the 18th century a group of Lutheran Pietists from Halle appeared on the scene on the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Acting as travellers, pilgrims, medical actors and missionaries they tried to establish themselves in trading centres of the Ottoman Empire like Smyrna and in the imperial capital Istanbul, making detours as far as Palestine and Syria. The objective of this paper is to analyse the material culture connected to the oriental journeys of the polyglot Pietist networker Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf and of a group of young Pietist following his paths. After Ludolf had returned to Western Europe, outposts were maintained in Smyrna and Istanbul until 1705. Which roles did three-dimensional objects play for the success of the Pietists and their performances?

Among others the following objects will be discussed: books used as gifts for European diplomatic agents and Greek-Orthodox clergymen, the medical kits that migrated from the *Waisenhausapotheke* in Halle to Istanbul and enabled the Pietists to use medical services as “doorbuster”, the modern Greek Bibles distributed for free to proselytes, or the pilgrim souvenirs collected during their trips to Jerusalem. Source material will be presented connected to the Pietists’ medical shop located in the centre of Istanbul. After one of the Pietist’s had fallen prey to the plague in February 1705 the Ottoman authorities put their shop under quarantine and forced them to keep it closed for several months causing its financial ruin and giving a final blow to the Pietist outpost in Istanbul. The central assumption of the paper is that in order to capture wholeheartedly the activities of the Pietists in different Ottoman or Levantine societies the aspects of material culture have to take a central stance.

Stefano Saracino is an assistant professor at the Lehrstuhl für Geschichte der Frühen Neuzeit, University of Jena. From 2014-2018, he conducted a research project on the last wills and charitable endowments of the Greeks in Vienna (University of Vienna). In 2017, he was a visiting professor at the Graduiertenkolleg "Interkonnfessionalität in der Frühen Neuzeit" (University of Hamburg). His current book project is on the migration of Greek-Orthodox from the Ottoman Empire to the Holy Roman Empire.